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UNITED NATIONS RELIEF AND WORKS AGENCY FOR PALESTINE REFUGEES IN THE NEAR EAST

Offers by Member States of grants and scholarships for higher education, including vocational training, for Palestine refugees

Report of the Secretary-General

1. The present report is submitted to the General Assembly in pursuance of its resolution 46/46 D of 9 December 1991.

2. The report includes the substance of responses from Member States and United Nations agencies to the appeal contained in that resolution, together with reference to further action taken by Member States and United Nations agencies in response to the appeal contained in General Assembly resolutions 32/90 F of 13 December 1977, 33/112 C of 18 December 1978, 34/52 C of 23 November 1979, 35/13 B of 3 November 1980, 36/146 H of 16 December 1981, 37/120 D of 16 December 1982, 38/83 D of 15 December 1983, 39/99 D of 14 December 1984, 40/165 D of 16 December 1985, 41/69 D of 3 December 1986, 42/69 D of 2 December 1987, 43/57 D of 6 December 1988, 44/47 D of 8 December 1989 and 45/73 D of 11 December 1990. By these resolutions the Assembly appealed to all States, specialized agencies and non-governmental organizations to augment special allocations for grants and scholarships to Palestine refugees; invited the relevant United Nations agencies to continue, within their respective spheres of competence, to extend assistance for higher education to Palestine refugee students; and requested UNRWA to act as the recipient and trustee for such special allocations and scholarships and to award them to qualified refugee candidates.

3. In 1991-1992, the Government of Japan offered 16 fellowships, through UNRWA, to Palestine refugees who are employed by UNRWA as vocational training staff. Applications of nominees for these fellowships are currently being

processed by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). The fellowships, which apply to studies in Japan, are under the guidance of JICA. A review of this programme shows that since its inception in 1985 and until 1992 a total of 92 fellowships has been provided by the Government of Japan under the programme. In 1989, the Government of Japan contributed $1 million, to be spent over a five-year period, towards UNRWA's university scholarship programme for secondary school graduates. The recipients are Palestine refugee students from the occupied territory. A total of 140 recipients participated in the programme in 1991-1992. These awards, while not specifically in response to the General Assembly resolutions, are in keeping with their spirit.

4. The Government of Switzerland contributed $180,000 in 1989 to UNRWA's university scholarship programme for secondary school graduates, and contributed an additional $213,000 and $197,300 to the programme in 1990 and 1991, respectively. The recipients total 136 Palestine refugee students who participated in the programme in 1991. The awards, while not specifically in response to the General Assembly's resolutions, are in keeping with their spirit.

5. The United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), as part of its long-standing agreement with UNRWA, granted 66 fellowships to Palestine refugee education staff of UNRWA in the period 1981 to 1990. In September 1990, the Director-General addressed a circular letter to member States and foundations appealing to those who had not done so to contribute to the special fund opened at UNESCO to provide fellowships for students from the occupied territory. This was a second renewal of the appeal originally made on 8 December 1986 and renewed on 27 April 1988. The first two appeals yielded $63,000 as cash contributions and 35 sponsored fellowships. More recently, a contribution of $300,000 was received for the fund. The Director-General also launched on 7 September 1990 an appeal to 89 universities in all parts of the world, inviting them to grant research and further training fellowships to Palestinian researchers and lecturers in the various areas of science and technology. Eleven replies have been received. In addition, UNESCO has decided to offer its support to the initiative of several prestigious European universities, to launch - together with the institutions of higher education in Palestine - an inter-university cooperation programme called PEACE (Palestinian European Academic Cooperation in Education), in support of the latter institutions, and consisting of seminars and joint studies. UNESCO's support to the PEACE programme will be channelled through a project called UNITWIN (University Twinning).

6. The World Health Organization (WHO) continued to offer a postgraduate training fellowship programme aimed at developing the technical and managerial skills of the staff of UNRWA's Department of Health, and at meeting future replacement needs under the various health disciplines. Seven Palestinian refugee health staff of UNRWA benefited from these WHO international fellowships in 1991. WHO has awarded more than 31 such fellowships since 1986. During the biennium 1990-1991, WHO also granted three fellowships to Palestinian students: one for studies in paediatric cardiology in Belgium for

a full scholastic year and two for studies in oncology in Belgium for four months each. These were provided under the WHO special technical support programme to improve the health conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Arab territories.

7. The World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) followed up its award of 15 fellowships in the period 1980 to 1990 with the offer of a further award in 1992.